

Price Sisters

WASTED LIVES

"MY DAUGHTERS will now die. It is damnable. There is no chance they will call off their action on the basis of long term promises."

These are the words of Mr. Albert Price, father of the Price sisters, when he heard that Mr. Jenkins, the Home Secretary, had refused to transfer the girls to a prison in Northern Ireland.

The Price sisters were convicted of the bombings outside the Old Bailey in March 1973. When they received sentence at Winchester on 14 November last year, they declared their intention of going on hunger strike until they were allowed to serve their terms of imprisonment in Northern Ireland. Until

12 May they had been "co-operating with the prison doctors who were feeding them artificially through a tube". This co-operation allowed the tubes to be placed down their throats. They then withdrew this "co-operation" and had to be carried, struggling, from their cells and held down while being fed. The doctors, after five days, decided that it was too dangerous to carry on this forced feeding as the girls could easily choke to death. Since then they have had only water.

It is forecast that they could both be dead within this week. They are already extremely weak and even intravenous drip feeding needs co-operation, which

Continued on Page 6

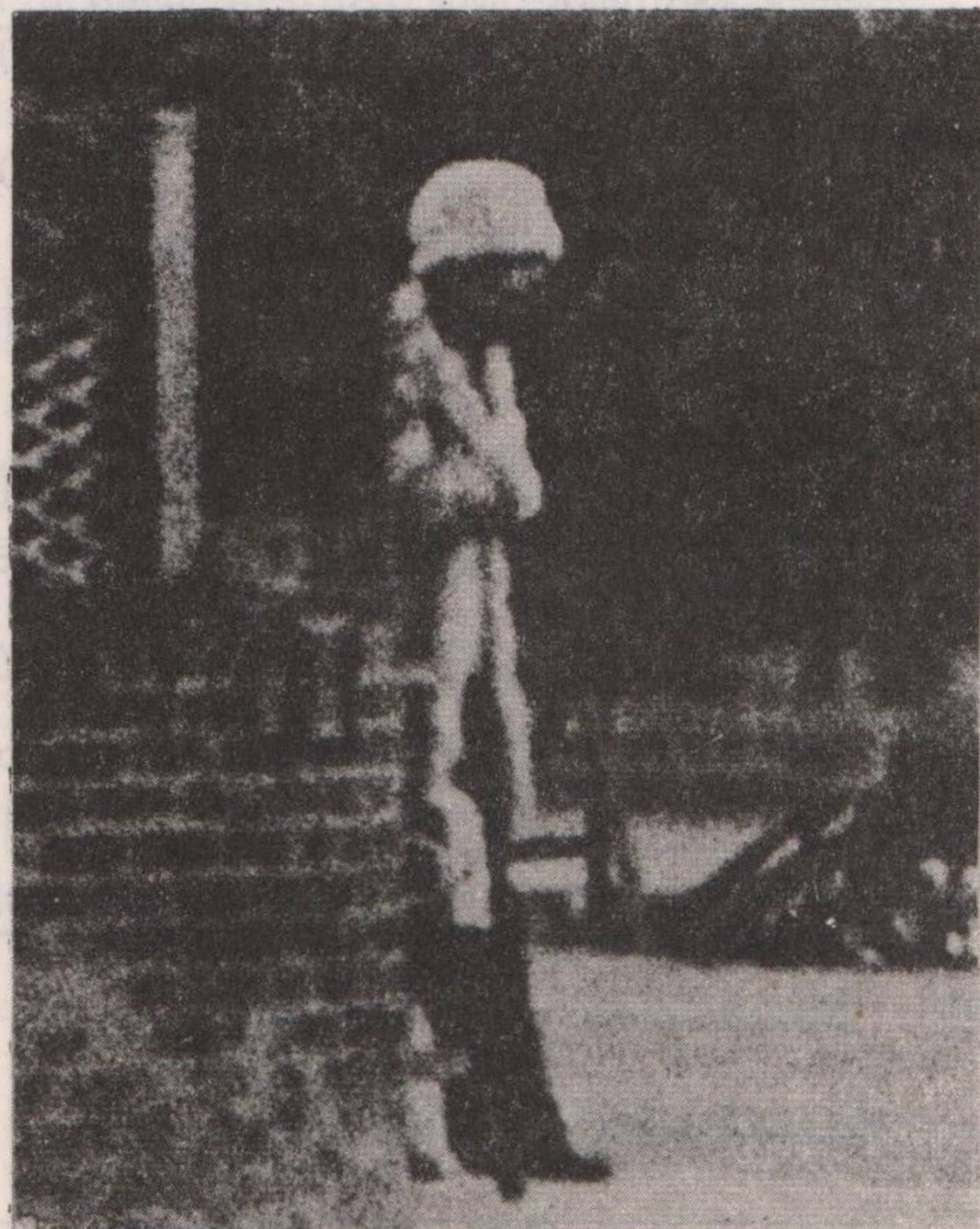


"EXCUSE ME, SIR -- BUT ARE YOU A CATHOLIC OR A PROTESTANT ?"

WATCHING THE WATCHERS

A PARTIAL victory has been won at the police flats in Stockwell where a group of us have been squatting since January.

We had demanded that Lambeth council buy the flats from the owners (the police) with us in occupation and that they take



PLAIN CLOTHES POLICEMAN (blown up)

us over as tenants, thereby solving both our homelessness and the problem of the police flats which were to be left empty for another two years.

The council are now going ahead with the purchase but have said that they cannot re-house us as tenants as we would be accused of jumping the queue. However they did agree to give the eight families short-life property if the single people found their own accommodations.

After much discussion and nearly four weeks behind barricades, we decided to accept the proposals only on the following conditions:

- 1) That we are provided with property of not less than 9 months' life.
- 2) That the houses are all wind and watertight, up to public health standards and with all the services connected.
- 3) That we have the right to reject anything that does not comply with point (2).
- 4) That the council will give us one month's notice when they require the houses for de-

molition and will give us further short-life property when we move out

5) That council tenants are moved in to the police flats as we move out, otherwise we will re-squat the block.

6) That we will be included in a new "temporary accommodation" category if such is introduced by the council in June. (This will abolish all bed and breakfast accommodation and give homeless people the right to short-life council property instead.)

THE COUNCIL have accepted all these conditions. We will be responsible for maintaining and repairing the houses, as an association which the council will recognise.

* It may be of interest to !! other squatters to learn that during the building of our barricades we were watched by the "robinson crusoe" character in the picture and an accomplice in a dark suit who saw the camera and withdrew. Later on, as the eviction date grew nearer, a young man with long hair and glasses, who had been seen hanging around before, took a photograph of one of the barricades on the front door, and hurried off when challenged.

Never mind, we are watching the watchers.

K.M.

THE GENERAL STRIKE

IN RECENT months we have seen two strikes which may be said to have changed history. The Miners' strike which caused the Heath government to resign through over-confidence and last week's Protestant strike which destroyed the power set-up worked out in the Sunningdale agreement on Northern Ireland.

The theory of the general strike as an agency for social change has been by-passed and a BBC commentator at the beginning of the Ulster strike sneered at the concept of the 'Sorellian strike'. Sorel himself is one of the great unread, and almost unreadable, and has suffered much in reputation from an intellectual link with the theoretical side of Fascism. Indeed, Sorel's labelling of the General strike as a 'myth' did much to add to the intellectual confusion.

There seem to be two definitions of the term 'general strike'; the first is a description of any strike for a political, not an economic or industrial purpose; secondly, the General strike which was a universal or nation-wide strike of all workers.

The Chartists included in their aims the Grand National Holiday which was an Utopian concept; Jack London also wrote an Utopian story, The Dream of Debs which carried over the idea in the terms of the Industrial Workers of the World. This idea has long been a fundamental theory of the IWW and the concept is that every little strike is a rehearsal for the General Strike, and it is obvious that the majority of strikes do implant in the worker an idea of his strength.

In recent years with the growth in power of the trade-unions the strike has become more formal and more bureaucratically organized, and concerned largely with economic and industrial questions. Sorel in his Reflections on Violence works it out that the success of the bureaucratic unions in negotiating wage claims through strikes conveyed to the workers the idea that the employers were more vulnerable to the strike method than they seem. Such is the rigidity of the unions and the universal apprehension to keep strikes 'non-political' that the temptation to strike for aims other than economic still persists.

The 'wild-cat' strike is a phenomenon which takes place spontaneously and hence cannot be catered for by any improvement in union bargaining machinery. Sociologists who have investigated wild-cat strikes have come to the conclusion that they happen spontaneously --they cannot come to any formula to solve the problem (as they put it).

It has become obvious over the years that the General strike is not just a theory or a 'myth' as Sorel described it. As industry and the state become more complex they become more vulnerable. As capitalistic combines become more gigantic and production is spread out over the country, production becomes more easily undermined.

The victories of the miners and the Protestants have shown that victory is possible by such methods as a general strike for non-economic purposes. It is perfectly true that the strike

is just a method or a weapon and it has no relation to the aims of the strike. Strikes have been held for the most reactionary purposes.

It is also becoming obvious that the trade unions are becoming more and more conservative and they play politics depending upon which party is in power. Their achievements for the workers, and they have been many, were just part of the crumbs of capitalism. The trade unions will never admit that the whole cake belongs to the workers. Even racketeering unionists like Jimmy Hoffa secure some concessions (at a percentage) for their members.

The achievement of economic aims is insufficient and with trade unions becoming more and more part of the power system, the use of the strike as a method of social change becomes more and more necessary.

Jack Robinson.

*Leo Tolstoy: The Law of Love and the Law of Violence paper £ 0.95 (9p)
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MALATESTA SPEAKS

* * * MAJORITIES AND MINORITIES

X=X

WE DO NOT recognise the right of the majority to impose the law on the minority, even if the will of the majority in somewhat complicated issues could really be ascertained. The fact of having the majority on one's side does not in any way prove that one must be right. Indeed, humanity has always advanced through the initiative and efforts of individuals and minorities, whereas the majority, by its very nature, is slow, conservative, submissive to superior force and to established privileges.

But if we do not for one moment recognise the right of the majorities to dominate minorities, we are even more opposed to domination of the majority by a minority. It would be absurd to maintain that one is right because one is in a minority. If at all times there have been advanced and enlightened minorities, so too have there been minorities which were backward and reactionary; if there are human beings who are exceptional and ahead of their times, there are also psychopaths, and especially are there apathetic individuals who allow themselves to be unconsciously carried on the tide of events.

In any case it is not a question of being right or wrong; it is a question of freedom, freedom for all, freedom for each individual so long as he does not violate the equal freedom of others. No-one can judge with certainty who is right and who is wrong, who is closer to the truth and which is the best road to the greatest good for each and every one. Experience through freedom is the only means to arrive at the truth and the best solution; and there is no freedom if there is not the freedom to be wrong.

*

IN OUR OPINION, therefore, it is necessary that majority and minority should succeed in living together peacefully and profitably by mutual agreement and compromise, by the intelligent recognition of the practical necessities of communal life and of the usefulness of concessions which circumstances make necessary.

As well as their reason and experience telling them that in spite of using all the alchemy of elections and parliament one always ends up by having laws which represent everything but the will of the majority, anarchists do not recognise that the majority as such, even if it were possible to establish beyond all doubt what it wanted, has the right to impose itself on the dissident minorities by the use of force.

Apart from these considerations, there always exists the fact that in a capitalist regime, in which society is divided into rich and poor, into employers and employees whose next meal depends on the absolute power of the boss, there cannot be really free elections.

MINI-BRIEFS

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A NEW design of weapon has just been patented by the Ministry of Defence. The patent number is 1333558 and the weapon... an archery bow.

GGGG

IN SEATTLE the president of the "Support Your Local Police" committee has been charged with attempting to bribe two policemen.

GGGG

IN LONDON, Mr Robert McLerie, who is unemployed, asked a passer-by for a cigarette. He was then arrested and charged with "begging alms" under the 1824 Vagrancy Act. Clerkenwell magistrates sent him to prison for a month.

GGGG

THE AUSTRALIAN government was recently puzzled by an item for £25,000 in the defence budget for "Censorship of Posts and Telecommunications." On investigation they found 150 men on their payroll, who were left over from the last war. The men had continued work unnoted, keeping in practice by censoring each other's messages.

GGGG

FIRE BROKE OUT at the Manchester factory of a firm which makes sprinkler systems. Extensive damage was done when one of their own sprinklers installed in the building failed to operate.

A BLIND MAN has been appointed chairman of the committee which censors films in Clarkstown, New York. Asked how he expected to judge material he couldn't see, he replied, "Pornography ins't a case of seeing, it's a case for feeling."

LETTERS

Dear Comrades,

FREE SPEECH OUTSIDE UTOPIA

While accepting the dangers inherent in the NUS policy on Free Speech for 'fascists and racists' it is not possible to dismiss the question with the woolly utopianism expressed by Keith Paton in his article "Free Speech Matters" (FREEDOM 25.5.74). It is interesting that comrade Paton should begin his article with a reference to the smashing of the anarchist presses in Russia in 1918, and the toll of lives lost fighting authoritarian socialism in Kronstadt and the Ukraine. It should be remembered that the Kronstadt revolutionaries were not fighting for absolute free speech but, according to the Petropavlovsk Resolution, 'to establish freedom of speech & press for workers and peasants, for anarchists and Left socialist parties'. Similarly in the Ukraine Nestor Makhno was not known for his liberal attitude towards free speech for Bolsheviks and White Guardists!

These examples are, of course, related to anarchists in war situation. Is it possible to accept a distinction between the situation in the Soviet Union then and in Britain today? In short is there such a thing as 'war anarchism'? It is, I believe, necessary that we accept a distinction between acts which are tactically wrong and those which are morally wrong. Equally we must accept priorities.

Comrade Paton is, I feel, taking a moralistic and absolutist attitude towards the question of free speech. The statement, "To suppress anybody's free speech is tantamount to claiming infallibility for our perspective" is, taken to its logical conclusion, a formula for inaction. If we should not disrupt the meetings of fascists because we accept the fallibility of our analysis then it would be improper to block the way to the gas chambers in case there is a fault in our analysis that it is wrong to exterminate Jews. Perhaps we should also drop the fight against capitalism and the state in case our analysis of them is faulty. This is cloud cuckoo land.

The debate on the right of free speech is, as Jack Robinson states, important. It is important because we sorely need a new analysis. Any analysis of free speech which was made more than

twenty years ago has been made obsolete by the mass media. With Radio, TV and the mass circulation presses in the hands of the enemy it is ridiculous to suggest that the right to speak from a soapbox on a street corner is the right of free speech.

On the lesser subject of tearing down the opposition's posters, a practice which comrade Paton sees as objectionable, I have a personal interest. I recently removed a poster advertising a beauty contest and in condemnation was told that people should be free to attend this function if they so wished. I felt an insult to our female comrades and believe that I acted in good faith. My reaction may only be a matter of degree which did not find much sympathy in our male comrades of the far left. Perhaps racism rather than sexism hits nearer the nerve. Ask yourself: would you leave displayed a poster inviting the public to, say, a 'Best Nigger Contest'?

The question is: 'where do we draw the line?'. The NUS has attempted to institutionalise this 'line' and has obviously suffered the consequences of attempting the impossible. Any attempt by an institution to censor speakers will inevitably involve injustices. Who, we must ask, will be the censor? This is a situation which, as anarchists, we must clearly question.

We each have our own limit of tolerance. Some comrades would fight the fascists if they ever achieved power, some when they took to the street, others at their meetings. Many of us choose to fight fascism with whatever comes to hand whenever they raise their heads. The operative word is fight. I assert this only in the event that it has escaped comrade Paton's notice that there is a war on.

Larry.

Dear Comrades,

"Come the Revolution..."

Having read Kathy Perlo's article in the May 11 edition of FREEDOM I felt obliged to comment on an error which her thinking contains. The comments which I wish to make do not bear directly on the issue of sexism which Ms. Perlo is discussing, yet indirectly they are vitally important in dealing with all aspects of life with which anarchists are concerned.

The error, which Ms. Perlo shares with a good proportion of the anarchist movement, is utopianism. Now I admit that some sort of visionary goal is necessary to avoid becoming bogged down in the mire of day to day battles. I also admit that ... the ideal of decentralised, self sufficient semi-tribal units held by Ms. Perlo is a desirable goal for some, perhaps most of the population. Yet not once did Ms. Perlo mention how she thought such conditions could be brought about. To reorder our present industrial system so that such a state of affairs is possible is a task which will take decades to accomplish. It is not the end result of a week's work of machine smashing. If we wish to preserve the benefits of a full cultural life, a life which only a highly developed level of the means of production makes possible, we cannot condemn ourselves once more to the "wretched, short, and brutish" life which the toil of our parents, grandparents and great-grandparents has lifted us from.

Of course Ms. Perlo said that she wishes to retain the benefit of technology. Where then, is the general scheme by which we may transform the world in the interim between the "smashing of industry" and the advent of the blessed heaven on earth? Power plants, even methane operated ones, do not rise out of the ground because one wishes them to do so. Coal mines don't become automated without the co-ordinated efforts of a massive number of workers. What will be the form of organization by which we co-operate to undertake this "rebuilding of the world" (no small task) unless it be the revolutionary syndicate.

Ms. Perlo's utopianism not only blinds her to the time and effort required to build a world in a more human image. As with all utopians she is religiously certain that her vision is universal. Now, not all power can be supplied from local resources (solar power, wind power cannot be tapped in many localities; water power, also not universally available, has ecological disadvantages in many cases; power from waste can only be useful as an auxiliary source). Similarly, raw materials are not universally available. Finally, Ms. Perlo assumes that every locality is self supporting in terms of food, a patently ridiculous assumption. The famines sweeping the equatorial belt of the world right now are not simply a result of imperialism though it does play a part. Weather does go bad, crops do fail. If your land is underwater you can't plant wheat. If you haven't had rain in seven years you can't plant rice. Libertarians should recognize the interdependence of the world's

people and plan for the mechanisms whereby the "developed" world may help the underdeveloped world in a non exploitive way once capitalism and bureaucratic socialism are overthrown. What Kathy Perlo does not realize is that we cannot simply shut ourselves off in little garden communities if we happen to be in that fortunate part of the world where the land can provide everything. We have a moral obligation to those in less fortunate parts of the world.

I am not arguing for a retention of the present industrial system. I agree with Ms. Perlo in saying that we must decentralize as much as possible. I also agree with her in saying that the ideas of anarchism should focus exclusively on industry, work, economics (whatever you want to call it). What I am arguing for, however, is realism, a realization of the immensity of the task ahead. I am also arguing against the dogmatic assertion that one way of life will be best for all individuals. Many people, myself included, would prefer to spend at least part of their lives in a metropolis of some size. Having spent my childhood in a small isolated rural town I know that such a life is not the idyllic situation that many city bred people imagine it is. A free society would allow people to choose the manner in which they wish to live. Anarchists should act similarly in the here and now and realize that their vision must contain a balance of "city" and community, in the sense that Ms. Perlo's vision means. It must also contain a balance of decentralization and interdependence if we wish to avoid the twin evils of ignorant parochialism and the regimentation of humankind.

Our Marxist opponents often criticize us anarchists, and rightly so, for being lost in a cloud of dreams, for being out of touch with reality. Ms. Perlo's vision with its lack of any suggestion as to how to reach it is an example of such a dreamland. If one adopts such a vision one condemns oneself to total ineffectiveness in the real world (unless one chooses to undertake actions totally disconnected from the future ideal as many such visionaries do). Often the adoption of such a dream ends in complete disillusionment and a renunciation of the desire to construct any vision (in the best sense of the word) of a more human and beautiful existence. Often the holding of a dream unconnected with reality leads to the adoption of mindless activism, the idea that doing anything no matter how useless is better than doing nothing.

As I said before, I share Ms. Perlo's more inclusive definition



Natalie Herzen.

the Herzen family circle, and especially to Natalie Herzen, the eldest daughter of the famous Russian populist and libertarian.

HERZEN'S DAUGHTER

DAUGHTER OF A REVOLUTIONARY:

Natalie Herzen and the Bakunin/Nechaev Circle. Edited by Michael Confino, Alcove Press, London, 1974. 416pp., £ 4.50.

The present work is a greatly expanded English edition of Professor Confino's Violence dans la violence, which was published last year in Paris and reviewed in FREEDOM on November 3, 1973. Nearly twice the size of the original, it adds a whole new section of documents relating to

of anarchism as something which begins and ends with the living concrete individual and his/her total life. This letter was not meant as an attack upon her feelings but rather as an encouragement for her to clarify her goals and the means whereby she may achieve them.

In solidarity,

Pat Murtagh

Alexander Herzen (1812-1870) spent the last quarter-century of his life in Western Europe, grappling with what Confino calls the "complex and pathetic" problem of raising his children in a new cultural environment without severing them from their Russian roots. His efforts were only partially successful. Natalie for one, though she retained her command of Russian and her concern for the fate of her homeland, experienced a series of unhappy personal episodes, culminating in the so-called Penisi affair, in which she rebuffed the advances of a blind Sicilian nobleman, who thereupon threatened to kill her.

As a result, Natalie suffered a nervous breakdown from which she was only slowly and precariously nursed back to health. She was left with a permanent distrust of new suitors, always doubting the sincerity of their feelings, always suspecting them of being fortune-hunters interested in her substantial inheritance.

In the end she was never to marry, but her suspicions served her well during her encounter with Sergei Nechaev who sought her not only for her money but also as an instrument in his conspiratorial ventures. Her diary, which was omitted from the French edition but is happily included here, provides a unique and fascinating insight into Nechaev's Machiavellian character.

The remainder of the volume focuses on Nechaev and Bakunin, adding much to our understanding of the relationship between the ageing Anarchist leader and his unscrupulous young disciple. It contains the first full

IN BRIEF

Strikers at a British Leyland subsidiary in Pamplona, Spain called off their sit-in on a promise that no worker would be arrested. The company (Authi) imposed a two-day lock-out as a penalty and has refused to agree to the reinstatement of sacked labour leaders.

Mr. Edward Heath, visiting China, presented Chairman Mao with a two volume set of Darwin's The Descent of Man. Chairman Mao had read much Darwin and expressed great admiration for his work.

Research by New York psychiatrists established that whilst policemen were accurate on descriptions (fr (from memory) of filmed incidents they had a tendency (one in five) to misinterpret what they saw. "(They) saw more than actually happened."

THE PRICE SISTERS...from Page 1

is unlikely to be forthcoming. Such feeding would only prolong life rather than prevent death.

In 1920, Terence McSweeney, the Mayor of Cork, committed this same act. He died after a seventy-four days hunger strike in Brixton Gaol, where the Price sisters are presently held.

Although the Price sisters' hunger strike is a deliberate political act, their demands could easily be granted on humanitarian grounds. In fact it is quite common for prisoners' requests for removal to a gaol near their relations to be granted. This and nothing else has been the Price sisters' demand from the day they were sentenced. No doubt the Home Secretary's decision is based on the encouragement their transfer would give to other Irish Republicans held in prison. Others are in fact on hunger strike to gain such transfers*. But no government likes to give in under pressure for this loss of face serves to undermine the authority of the State.

This deliberate sacrifice of lives for a minor demand does seem pointless and misguided. Their father's encouragement follows in the IRA tradition of the political use of martyrs for their nationalist cause. Many people have given their lives for causes they believe in but the Price sisters' demands are just not worth the lives of two young women. They should abandon their hunger strike and let their supporters campaign for their transfer by other means. The Home Secretary has already

Japanese trade unions are joining British unions in opposing plans for a Japanese-owned ball-bearing factory in Peterlee, County Durham. The General Secretary of the Japanese general council of trade unions said that plans in 'areas of cheap labour' undermined his members' bargaining power and Japanese wage rates (with fringe benefits) were higher than Britain's.

B.O.S.S., THE SOUTH AFRICAN SECRET POLICE, HAS, IT IS CLAIMED, SUBSIDIZED A NEW ZULU POLITICAL PARTY TO OPPOSE AN OUTSPOKEN LEADER OF THE KWAZULU AFRICAN TRIBAL HOMELAND.

A German writer was jailed in Athens for fourteen months for chaining himself to a lamp-post in Constitution Square and distributing anti-regime literature. He said he intended to demonstrate West German solidarity with the Greek people. "If this was turned into a public lesson in fascism, this is scarcely my fault," he said.

said, "I believe it would be possible and reasonable for them to serve the bulk of their long sentences near their home in Northern Ireland." Their campaign should be directed to this end without the useless waste of lives sacrificed for the political ends of the Provisional IRA.

This does not mean that the Home Secretary's decision should not be condemned. They could have easily been transferred before this late date without the new government losing face, just on humanitarian grounds. However politicians in power are not renowned for their humanity and now the lives of two people are in jeopardy. Firstly because Mr. Jenkins and the government do not want to lose face and secondly because their deaths will be useful for the republican cause.

P.T.

*At the time of writing, three: Gerard Kelly, convicted with the Price sisters of the London car bombings; Frank Stagg, convicted with a Catholic priest of running IRA activities in Coventry, and Michael Gaughan, sentenced to seven years in 1971 for robbing a bank of £350 for IRA funds. As we go to press, the death of Michael Gaughan has been announced. (On Sunday last it was reported that Hugh Feeney, also sentenced with the Price sisters, had taken food after a 200 days fast, on the strength of the Home Secretary's indication that the prisoners might possibly serve the bulk of their long sentences in N. Ireland.)

The 20 day Indian railway strike ended in defeat for the railwaymen, many dismissals and eviction from railway 'tied' quarters of strikers' families. It was said that public sympathy disappeared after sabotage incidents which led to several serious accidents.

The Civil and Public Services Association decided never to hold another conference of their union in the Isle of Man because of the long hours worked by the hotel chambermaids, and described the Island as a 'dictatorship' with little local political or union activity. It was said that chambermaids worked from 6 a.m. to 8 p.m., seven days a week with only an hour or two off each day. For this they were paid between £9 and £10 a week. The secretary of the Tourist Board said, "As their stay here is brief, they are hardly qualified to comment on the quality of life on the Isle of Man."

The Commission of Enquiry on the Manx 'Summerland' fire when 50 people were killed, said that there were 'no villains'. The disaster was due to faults in design, many inadequacies and failures in management and lack of good communications between the various bodies concerned.

Sancho Panza.

VERY IMPORTANT PRISONER

The following item from the Liverpool Free Press was sent to us by a comrade with the comment: "It would seem that George Pottinger breeds corruption wherever he goes. While organisations like PROP fight for prisoners' rights, the law still protects and pampers people like Pottinger..." :

'The way they were carrying on - you'd have thought the Queen was in jail!' But no - it wasn't the Queen who was getting the red carpet treatment. It was George Pottinger, the corrupt friend of architect John Poulson, who is now taking a well-earned rest behind bars. And Pottinger has been spending some of it here in Liverpool.

The arrival of this Very Important Prisoner was first noticed by other prisoners when unusually appetising, individually cooked meals were seen going along the corridor.

Pottinger was then given a few light duties in the prison hospital -- which soon had the other prisoners up in arms. For hospital work is THE plum job in the prison and it carries the top rate of pay - 64p a week. It's almost unheard of for a new prisoner to be given such a job. Normally it's a job you get 'promoted' to after years sewing mailbags for about 30p a week.' [7]

WILDCAT

3 Belmont Road, London SW4
25 May 1974

Wildcat, the anarchist news and information bulletin, is to be expanded into a new libertarian paper, which will be published monthly, starting in August.

The new **WILDCAT** will include:

- ★ the news and information in the existing bulletin
- ★ investigative reporting and longer political features; each issue will include a four-page supplement, also available to local or specialist libertarian papers as an insert; **Disaffecting the troops**, the first in this series, will be ready before the main paper is printed
- ★ analysis and polemic — book reviews, a guest column, a follow-up to **INSIDE STORY**'s media coverage and, above all, readers' letters.

WILDCAT will not have a 'line', though it will have an attitude. It will not restrict its readership to small groups of pacifists or syndicalists or vegetarians or council communists or insurrectionists. It will, however, publish articles from those who hold these positions. In general **Wildcat** will stir up trouble; criticise existing assumptions and forms of organisation; ask questions; not regard jokes as counter-revolutionary.

WILDCAT will be run by an association open to anyone who works for the paper. We are organising a series of open meetings to launch the association and the paper. Provisional dates are: 4pm 1 June at Copway Hall, London (definite); weekend of 8-9 June in Birmingham, Manchester and Glasgow; 15 June in Edinburgh; 22 June in London; 28 June in Leeds. If you want details of the meeting in your area please let us know. And if you can't come give us your views by letter

We appeal to you to contribute towards the costs of the paper by taking out a support subscription. Recommended rate: ½ per cent of gross annual earnings (ie £10 if you earn £2,000), but don't hesitate to give more if you can. Please make cheques payable to: Alternative Publishing Co Ltd.

Yours fraternally

Alan Balfour, Clive Challis, Wynford Hicks, Ann McFerran, Terry Phillips, Philip Sansom

★ PS to **INSIDE STORY** subscribers: any money still owing to you will be transferred to **Wildcat** as an ordinary sub.

Against Birching

AGAINST BIRCHING: Judicial Corporal Punishment in the Isle of Man, Angela Kneale. (NCCL 80p (post 7p) from NCCL 186 Kings Cross Road, London WC1 or Freedom Bookshop.)

Those who have campaigned for the abolition of barbaric forms of punishment all over the world have found usually that they are campaigning against prejudices and misinformation: in the Isle of Man, for instance, there are several widely held myths — that birching is an effective deterrent; that it is almost always inflicted for crimes of violence; that it is never given to first offenders. None is true, as this book emphatically proves. The author goes on to point out that "all forms of corporal punishment are fraught with danger. On the purely physical plane, the little research it has been possible to carry out has unearthed a young man who was birched in spite of a history of epilepsy; a boy who had attempted suicide

STUDENT GRANTS

---A MIDDLE CLASS VICTORY

AFTER A physically and financially exhausting year-long campaign the NUS has announced a 'victory' with the recent increases in student grants. At such times as these a 25% increase is no mean achievement but one is forced to ask, 'Victory for whom?' Certainly a number of anomalies relating to married women students have been removed, and Oxbridge students no longer qualify for a higher grant than their fellow students, but these increases only apply to students on mandatory grants. Mandatory grants are given to University and College of Education students while other students, in Colleges of Technology for instance, receive Discretionary grants. The 'discretion' rests with the students' Local Education Authority which directs which students will receive grants, and how much each

two days prior to being birched; and one youth who was birched before a severe, but hard to detect abdominal disease was discovered."

It is only since 1970 that the right to appeal a birching order has been made known, but several more birchings have occurred, either because the defendant genuinely preferred to get it over and done with, or on the advice of counsel. But it is Mrs. Kneale's contention that all birchings, even those when the defendants or their guardians waived the right to appeal, may have been illegal.

Judicial corporal punishment is not tolerated in any other part of Europe or indeed in the British Isles (with the exception of the Channel Islands), and this is a violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted and proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations without a dissenting vote.

The Isle of Man is violating a declaration made by Britain and the nations throughout the world.

Against Birching is a well documented condemnation of birchings and canings, but having no access to official records, Angela Kneale and her friends were forced to search painstakingly through the files of the Island's newspapers to piece together the evidence. Reaction on the Island to their efforts was swift and predictable: "We were troublemakers. We were not Manx. We had no right to interfere." L.G.

grant will be worth. The simpler distinction is that university students are mainly middle class and Technical College students are mainly working class.

The level at which a parental contribution is required has been increased by £100 p.a., but once again this favours the middle class parents. Parents can claim allowances for private school fees and for mortgage repayments. There is no allowance for parents who pay rent, no matter how high that rent may be.

The newly instituted Diploma of Higher Education Courses, recognised as two-thirds of a degree course, are to be made the subject of mandatory grants. Unfortunately the entrance requirements for these courses is to be fixed at two A-levels in GCE. A-levels are primarily sixth-form qualifications so such places on DHE courses are not readily available to the children of low-income or large families whose parents cannot afford to keep them at school for two extra years.

The DHE is a left-over from the Tory White Paper "Education -- a framework for expansion" which also plans to cut down the number of teachers in training. Many London colleges will have their training places cut by half. The Labour government has no plans for shelving the White Paper.

Larry.

HERZEN'S DAUGHTER...from P. 5

English translation of *The Catechism of the Revolutionary* (which Confino attributes to Nechaev), as well as the now celebrated letter of June 2, 1870, in which Bakunin repudiates the *Catechism* along with Nechaev's whole "Jesuitical system."

In addition, there are further important materials, some of which (including ten letters from Nechaev to Natalie Herzen) are not in the French edition. There is also a valuable though foreshortened introduction by Confino, four pages of illustrations, and a useful glossary of names, nicknames, and pen names, but regrettably no index. Three items from the French edition have been inexplicably omitted, among them a fascinating and important letter from German Lopatin to Bakunin describing the murder of Ivanov by Nechaev and his accomplices. Finally, though Confino has dispensed with the melodramatic French title and with his needless criticisms of Arthur Lehning, Lehning's extensive research on Bakunin is nowhere acknowledged, save for a brief and isolated citation in the reference notes.

Paul Avrich.

ANARCHIST DIALECTICS

"So why aren't you doing something!

All you do is sit around and criticize!"

HOW OFTEN, not least from friends, one hears those remarks when expressing opposition to the statist system we dwell in.

Often underpinning those remarks is the system itself, or its by-product -- a general RESTLESSNESS (from feeling statistly hemmed-in), Thoreau's "mass of men live in quiet desperation", what I'd call a must-do-something mentality. Idleness is tantamount to sin (the Protestant ethic is alive and well). Keep busy! Keep working toward that little suburban bungalow! MOVE! ACT! BE INVOLVED!

In responding to that typically modern-Western mentality, I'll avoid swinging to the polar-opposite and into Eastern quietism, won't argue it's always better to do nothing than something. Just often better, often better to do not a damn thing!

Or as Socrates put it to Crito, "YOUR ZEAL IS INVALUABLE IF A RIGHT ONE. IF WRONG, THE GREATER THE ZEAL, THE GREATER THE DANGER." That, brought up to modern-day, would take us to the system's snares.

They are numerous, so numerous as to send one sympathising with the paranoid. Like the psychiatric clinic. Or public education (Law School not least). Or the dole. Or the social service agency. Or civil service work, the job-security thereof. Or LEGAL marriage. All are statisms. All, hence, snares.

A totalitarian state does not bother with snares, does not wait for the free individual to come into its fold but seeks him out and brings him in. A democratic state does it via the snares. It then calmly sits back, folds its tentacles, and waits. The free person, sooner or later - if hungry or exhausted enough, or just plain lonely - bites at the bait.

Or most persons. A few cautiously step around the snares. They do not-something but nothing. They are non-involved. Non, that is, state-involved. They are non-busy, non-active. It seemingly has nothing to do with social change or social revolution. Yet there are surprises. Like Henry Thoreau, via his very hyper-individual-

ism, IS SUDDENLY THE SOLE ONE SUPPORTING THE SOCIAL REVOLUTIONARY JOHN BROWN, the sole one with guts enough to do it.

To go from day to day without ensnarement, without cooptation - though hardly the drama of social or collective change - is in itself a feat, like a guerrilla fighter making his way through hostile territory. The very doing-nothing, very negativity, is itself positive, the daily saying "no" to the state, a process we may call Anarchist Dialectics. If in the short run it is not making social revolution, it is doubtless living it.

Short-run dropout, long-run drop-in.

Sam Cohen

Detroit.

PRESS FUND

23 - 29 May

BELFAST: P.S. 32p; LONDON E17: P.W. 45p; NOTTINGHAM: A.B. 38p; GLASGOW: R.M. 43p; SOUTHAMPTON: B.D. 50p; BANGOR, N.I.: J.T. £ 5; BIRMINGHAM: M.D. & B.H. 40p; Anon £ 3; LONDON SE27: C.H. 50p.

TOTAL £ 10.98

Previously acknowledged: £ 563.28

TOTAL TO DATE: £ 574.26



HELP FOLD & DES-PATCH FREEDOM on Thursdays from 2 p.m. at Freedom Press, followed by get-together & refreshments.

WED. June 12: PICKET AT IRISH EMBASSY, 17 GROSVENOR PLACE SW1 in protest at remand of 5 Dublin anarchists in military custody. Starts 10-30 a.m. Bring posters "NO INTERNMENT OF REMAND PRISONERS": "FREE DUBLIN ANARCHISTS" "NO FRAME-UP OF DUBLIN ANARCHISTS"

Wed. June 12: PRISONERS WIVES UNICN - Meet at Bull Ring, Waterloo Station 1 p.m. for march to Lambeth Palace, then on to Parliament to lobby M.P.s.

MONDAY June 10. HARROW/HILLINGDON Socialist Women's group forum Women & Sexuality at 8 p.m. Harrow Baptist Church, College Rd. Harrow. Contact Brenda at Ruislip 32934.

ANARCHIST WOMEN'S GROUP meets Mondays. Tel. 01-883 2457

BLACKBURN Anarchist group forming. Please contact Keith Sowerby (correspondence only) 150 Shorrocks Lane, Blackburn, Lancs. BB2 4TT

PLAYERS for London based Anarchist Football Team(s) required. No natural skill necessary. Age/sex/etc. totally immaterial. Contact Jim at Freedom Press.

BRITISH WITHDRAWAL FROM N. IRELAND CAMPAIGN still continues. Infor., leaflets from BWNIC, c/o 3 Caledonian Rd., London N1

THE NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR CIVIL LIBERTIES says "If we do not get a healthier bank balance your civil liberties as well as everyone else's will be in even greater jeopardy." Send donation/ask for details of membership NCCL, 186 Kings Cross Road London WC1X 9DE (01-278 4575).

GIOVANNI MARINI DEFENCE COMMITTEE Paolo Braschi, C.P. 4263 2100 MILANO, Italy.

Letters, postcards to Giovanni Marini, Carcere di Potenza, 85100 POTENZA, Italy. Still awaiting trial after 2 years in jail.

STOKE NEWINGTON FIVE Solidarity Committee, 54 Harcombe Road, London N.15.

DIRECT ACTION, paper of the Syndicalist Workers Federation, single copies 5p + post, subscription £1. SWF c/o Grass Roots 178 Oxford Rd., Manchester 13.

Alternate Sundays HYDE PARK ANARCHIST FORUM Speakers' Corner 1 p.m. Speakers, listeners, hecklers welcome.

ABERYSTWYTH anarchists meet Thursdays in Downie's Vaults at 7.30 p.m.

CENTRO IBERICO meets socially each Sat/Sun 7.00 p.m. at 83A Haverstock Hill NW3 (side entrance in Steele's Rd). Buses 31 & 68. Tube Chalk/Fm Belsize Park.

BRECHT's St. Joan of the Stockyards at Half Moon Theatre, 27 Alie St. (off Commercial Rd., Leman St. E.1, Aldgate East) Tues-Sun until June 8, 7.30 p.m. Tel. 01-480 6465

UNITY THEATRE Case for a Rebel by Emmanuel Robles (Dutch Indonesia 1948; a European takes part in the nat. revolutionary movement) Every Fri., Sat. & Sun. June 7 - Jul 6 at 7.45 p.m. (387 8647)

BUILDING COLLECTIVE needs one or two more members with some building experience. Conversion of house to community centre near Finsbury Park, and other jobs. Ring Dick/Alison at 263 2111.

DUBLIN anarchists Robert Cullen, Eddie Jones, Desmond Keene, Columba Longmore and Noel Murry all remanded in Detention Centre, Curragh Military Camp, Ireland would like to hear from comrades.

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